



# The Toggle Iron

## Schooner *Ernestina*: An American Treasure

“More than 100 years ago, Grand Banks schooners were a common sight in New England ports. Today, the Schooner *Ernestina*, which also played a role in the exploration of the Arctic [and the transportation of Cape Verdean immigrants to America], is one of the last of these graceful fishing vessels. She is one example of the thirty-one exceptional artifacts and structures that will be restored and conserved with awards totaling \$7.6 million from *Save America’s Treasures* (SAT). In this case, the SAT funds will allow her to again provide first-hand experiences to students and adults on America’s Age of Sail. The *Ernestina*, like every SAT project, is at-risk of being lost-structural decay, rot, water damage and a host of other threats-but with an SAT award these cultural and historic treasures can continue to contribute to the next generation’s understanding of our national narrative.”

Save America’s Treasure’s 2007  
Official Press Release



The National Historic Landmark Schooner *Ernestina* is the official vessel for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

On December 12, 2007 the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities and the National Park Service, jointly announced the awarding of \$7.6 million in federal competitive Save America’s Treasures grants, which are made in collaboration with the National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Save America’s Treasures competitive awards preserve the nation’s most significant endangered intellectual and cultural artifacts, historic structures and historic sites. Of the 340 applicants, the program awarded 31 projects in 24 states. Front and center,

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### From the Superintendent

I sometimes wonder what went through the minds of New Bedford whalemens as they left their city on a whaling voyage. They could be gone for three to four years in search of the mighty leviathan, traveling around Cape Horn, whaling in the Pacific, sailing up to frigid Arctic waters. Along the way, some crew members jumped ship, while new ones joined during port stops in the Azores, Cape Verde, the West Indies, Hawaii, or northern Alaska. So too, we at New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park have seen crewmembers come and go. Through it all, we bade friends farewell, and welcomed new ones while carrying on our daily activities – many of which you’ll read about in this *Toggle Iron*. It’s been a long winter, but as we look to the completion and opening of the Corson building on May 16th, we hope you’ll join us in the adventures that lie ahead.

Celeste Bernardo

(Continued from page 1)

the press release focused on the Schooner *Ernestina*, which received \$500,000 matching funds to begin rehabilitation of the historic vessel.

New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park staff wrote the grant that was submitted by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).

“It was a team effort,” said Park Superintendent Celeste Bernardo, “including Federal, State, and community partners. This is another example of people rallying around this beloved schooner.”

The DCR recently announced a match of \$250,000. In addition, DCR also committed an additional \$40,000 to match a \$20,000 National Park Service Challenge Cost Share Grant to produce historical documentation of the vessel including line drawings, photographs, and a historical record of each of the vessel’s restorations. This document is essential in that it will record past and guide future preservation decisions so that the historical integrity of Schooner *Ernestina* will be maintained.

**Right: Tim Walker is one of many dedicated volunteers who have committed their time to restoring and preserving this American treasure. To find out how you can assist please contact Paul Brawley at (508) 992-4900.**



**National Park Service**  
U.S. Department of the Interior

New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park was established in 1996 to help preserve and interpret America’s nineteenth century whaling history. The park encompasses a 13-block National Historic Landmark District and addresses the history of the whaling industry and its influence on the economic, social, and environmental history of the United States.

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The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

**Temple Toggle-Iron:** The most successful harpoon ever made. Invented by Lewis Temple, an African American whalecraft-maker of New Bedford, Massachusetts in 1848, and at first called “porpoise iron” and “Temple’s gig,” it became the universal whale iron, and has never been improved upon. (From Clifford W. Ashley’s, **The Yankee Whaler**)

## Park Collaborates on After-School Program

The park has teamed up with the City of New Bedford, and Artworks!, Partners for the Arts and Community to offer a year-long after-school program called *Exploring my City through Art*. The program, funded by the city’s Invest in Kids! initiative, offers 4th and 5th graders from the Alfred J. Gomes school, located just outside the park boundaries, opportunities to learn about park interpretive themes and New Bedford’s history while exploring their creative side through art projects. The school year is broken into three semesters serving twenty kids each session.

Once a week, the participants are exposed to one of the park’s many partner sites and stories. Some of the sessions include: a scavenger hunt to get an overview of the national historical park, a walking tour of New Bedford’s working waterfront, an activity where the kids learned about the families associated with the Rotch-Jones-Duff House, a whaling merchant’s home, through some of the museum’s objects, and a presentation on whales and the ocean at the New Bedford Whaling Museum. The day after each field trip experience, the kids work with art educators at Artworks! to create pieces that incorporate the information they have learned.

“The program has been so beneficial to all involved”, states Chief of Visitor Services Jennifer Gonsalves. “The kids, many with direct family ties to New Bedford whalemens, gain an appreciation and understanding of their personal history. The park and its partners help to build a new generation of stewards, and the Artworks! staff gets kids excited about creative expression through the visual arts.”



**Heather Ford, an educator for the Working Waterfront Festival, helps students learn about the fishing industry through hands-on activities like trying on fishing gear.**



# Park Hosts Volunteer Appreciation Event

The Corson Building education space was the venue for the park's annual volunteer appreciation event held at the end of March. Almost 100 park and partner volunteers attended the event, which included awards, refreshments, and tours of the newly-completed Corson Building. The highlight of the evening was the recognition of 34 NPS volunteers for ten years of service. This number represents 45% of the original 75 volunteers that joined the NPS's Volunteer-in-Parks program in 1998. In addition, seven NPS volunteers received recognition for five years of

service. Also, for the first time, volunteers from the park's many partner organizations were in attendance and recognized with certificates for their support of the mission of the National Park Service. These partners include the New Bedford Historical Society, Waterfront Historic Area League, New Bedford Whaling Museum, New Bedford Port Society, Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum, and Schooner *Ernestina*. At the conclusion of the awards program, volunteers were taken through the newly-rehabilitated Corson Building.

Park Volunteer Coordinator Emily Prigot remarked on the importance of hosting such an event, "The annual appreciation event is a small token of our gratitude to the hundreds of volunteers who contribute their time and expertise to the park." Prigot continued, "It is fitting that we included our partner organizations in the recognition event as we work side by side everyday to tell the story of whaling to the many visitors who come to our sites."



Superintendent Celeste Bernardo (middle) presents New Bedford Port Society volunteers Chris Berry (left) and Paul Swain (right) with a certificate of appreciation on behalf of the park.



Left: Park volunteers Ruth Niemczyk (left) and Carol Strupczewski (right) serve chowder at the event.

Below left: Celeste Bernardo awards long-time volunteer Kay Berube with a 10-year Volunteers-In-Parks pin.

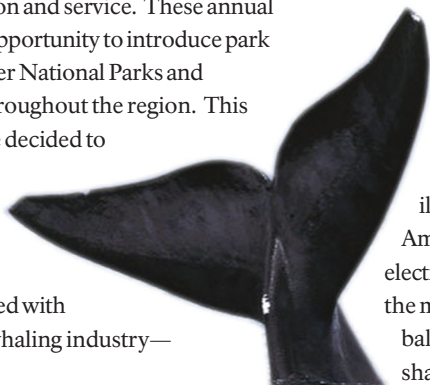
Below: Jane Harrop (left) Cliff Roderiques (middle) and Judy Roderiques (right).



## Whale Watch Brings Park Volunteers Together

On a dreary morning in October of 2007, about 50 volunteers representing New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park boarded Captain John's boat out of Plymouth, Massachusetts for a whale watching expedition. Every year the park organizes a field trip for its volunteers as a way of thanking them for their dedication and service. These annual trips serve as an opportunity to introduce park volunteers to other National Parks and historical sites throughout the region. This year, however, we decided to take a break from history and focus on the primary natural resource associated with New Bedford's whaling industry—the whale.

During the bumpy ride out to sea, an onboard naturalist taught passengers how to distinguish between different species of whales and introduced them to the basic biology and behaviors that define whales. Although the ocean was choppy, the whales were in an exceptionally playful mood and we were treated to an afternoon-long display of acrobatics that included jumping, breaching, and diving.



In the 19th century, whales provided valuable whale oil which illuminated the homes and streets of America before the advent of electricity. Whale spermaceti lubricated the machines of the industrial age and baleen, the plastic of its time, gave shape to the latest fashion of the

Victorian age. At the height of New Bedford's participation in the whaling industry, Yankee whalers hunted four primary species: right whales in the North Atlantic, sperm whales in the South Pacific, grey whales off the west coast of North America, and bowheads in the Arctic. Whalers, in a sense explorers and scientists of their time, mapped previously uncharted oceans and brought back information about the size of whale stocks and the migratory patterns of the different species of whales. Today, we understand the urgency of protecting these spectacular mammals while, at the same time, connecting visitors to the stories of those who risked their lives, families, and fortunes to hunt them and provide light to the world.



# Volunteer Spotlight



You will find Ed DaCosta (left) and Mike Nicholas (right) working together at the information desk every Friday morning just as they have for over 9 years.

Name: Ed DaCosta

Age (optional): 79

City/Town you live in: Acushnet, MA

Family: wife, 3 children, and 7 grandchildren

Occupation: Retired insurance agent

Special Interests/Hobbies: Computers

How long have you been a volunteer at the visitor center? 13 years

Why did you decide to become a volunteer?

Like to meet people of different places

What do you enjoy most about volunteering at the visitor center?

Meeting and working with the people.

What is the most interesting thing that you've done in your life?

Traveling

What is the one thing that you'd like to do or try?

Like to travel to Rome

If you grew up in this area, what is one of your fondest memories?

Acushnet Park South End

## Volunteers-in-Parks (VIP) 2007 statistics

2007 Servicewide VIP figures:

163,286 volunteers contributed 5.4 million hours

2007 Northeast Region (NER) VIP figures:

38,423 volunteers contributed just over 1 million hours

2007 New Bedford Whaling NHP VIP figures:

117 volunteers contributed 4,412 hours

Out of 59 NER parks reporting, New Bedford Whaling

NHP is 42nd in VIP hours and 37th in VIP numbers

Name: Mike S. Nicholas

Age (optional): 82

City/Town you live in: New Bedford, MA

Family: Wife and son

Occupation: Retired US Air Force 25 yrs., retired US Postal Service 20 years

Special Interests/Hobbies: golf and reading

How long have you been a volunteer at the visitor center? 9 years

Why did you decide to become a volunteer? It seemed to be interesting

What do you enjoy most about volunteering at the visitor center?

The many people you see and meet

What is the most interesting thing that you've done in your life?

Bailed out of a crippled aircraft (B-17)

What is the one thing that you'd like to do or try? To fly again

If you grew up in this area, what is one of your fondest memories?

Acushnet Amusement Park, South End Shore

# Park Crew List

## Park Welcomes New VIP Coordinator



Emily Prigot, the park's new volunteer coordinator.

In January National Park Service (NPS) New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park Superintendent Celeste Bernardo selected eighteen-year NPS veteran Emily G. Prigot as the new volunteer coordinator for New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park. Ms. Prigot is the first staff person to fill this newly-created position.

In making the announcement, Superintendent Bernardo said, "Emily brings many years' experience in interpretation and training to our park. Also, her background in teaching and knowledge of Portuguese and Spanish make her a natural choice as volunteer coordinator for New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park."

On accepting the new assignment, Prigot said, "I am so excited to be working in New Bedford. This city has so many wonderful elements, such as its outstanding historic and cultural resources, committed and talented partners and volunteers, and devoted park staff. I've visited New Bedford many times with my family to enjoy its museums and take in its yearly Summerfest. I look forward to meeting the park partners and staff, especially the volunteers. Together, we will all be working to carry out the mission of the National Park Service—that is, protecting and preserving our nation's natural and cultural resources."

Prigot worked as a teacher of Spanish and Portuguese at Dighton-Rehoboth Regional High School, in Rehoboth, MA. She taught Spanish at in the Lowell, MA public school system. She has also served as admissions counselor at Newbury College in Boston, MA and Director of Admissions at Marian Court Junior College in Swampscott, MA. She began working as an seasonal ranger at Boston National Historical Park (MA) in 1990, giving talks and tours at the Charlestown Navy Yard, on the WWII destroyer USS *Cassin Young*, and at the Bunker Hill Monument. This past year she served as supervisory lead ranger at Boston Harbor Islands National Park, which, like New Bedford, is a partnership park founded about ten years ago.

A native of Quincy (MA), Prigot holds a BA in Spanish from the University of Massachusetts, and a teaching certificate at the secondary level. Prigot lives with her husband and daughter in Canton, Massachusetts.

## Park Staff Receives Interpretation Award

The staff at New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park (NHP) received an Excellence in Interpretation Media Award at the National Park Service's Northeast Region Chief of Interpretation conference held in December in Providence, RI. The National Park Service Northeast Regional Director Dennis Reidenbach presented the award to Frank Barrows, Jennifer Gonsalves, Derek Santos, and Michelle Spink in recognition of a park anniversary publication that commemorated New Bedford Whaling NHP's accomplishments since its establishment on November 12, 1996.

In nominating the staff for its hard work on the publication, Park Superintendent Celeste Bernardo wrote, "*The First Decade: A Retrospective 1996-2006* is a celebration of New Bedford Whaling NHP, its partners, and

all that they have accomplished together in a very short period of time. The park distributes this publication to park visitors, present and potential partners, community members, and visiting dignitaries. The response from everyone has been overwhelmingly positive, and we have received many calls from other National Park Service units who want to produce a similar publication." The publication was done completely "in house" with park staff doing all of the layout and design and spending hours looking through images, newspaper articles, and other primary sources to illustrate the projects and activities of the park and its many community partners during the first decade.

For a hard copy of *The First Decade: A Retrospective 1996-2006*, contact New

Bedford Whaling National Historical Park at (508) 996-4095 or stop by the park visitor center at 33 William Street. To download a copy, visit the park's website at [www.nps.gov/nebe](http://www.nps.gov/nebe).



Left to right: Cape Cod National Seashore Superintendent George Price, Park Ranger Frank Barrows, Chief of Visitor Services Jennifer Gonsalves, Northeast Regional (NER) Director Dennis Reidenbach, Robert Fudge, NER Chief of Interpretation and Education



# Two Crew Members Set Sail

New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park would like to bid a fond farewell to two long-time crew members, Anne Brengle and Derek Santos. Both have accepted positions with new organizations and we wish them well. Anne and Derek gave a combined 21 years of service in support of the National Park Service mission, and we would like to thank them by sharing some of our fondest memories of their service to the National Park Service, the city, and the community. Some of our favorite moments with Anne and Derek are captured on the next page.



Derek Santos



Anne Brengle

## Anne Brengle Joins Coast Guard Foundation

Anne Brengle, President of the New Bedford Whaling Museum for 13 years, has taken the position as President of the Coast Guard Foundation, a nonprofit organization that provides annual funding to support the men and women of the U.S. Coast Guard and its academy. During her tenure at the museum, Anne worked with the museum board to lead the Whaling Museum through an impressive \$11 million expansion that included the Jacobs

gallery and its blue whale skeleton, and the acquisition of the Kendall collection. This expansion nearly doubled the holdings of the museum and established it as a world renowned library and research facility.

“Anne understood the importance and significance of establishing a national park and worked with others to make it happen,” said Superintendent Celeste Bernardo. “She

helped establish the Whaling Museum as an international attraction and a community gathering place.” Anne will be remembered for her vision, her ability to get things done against great odds, and her reassuring phrase “it will be fine.” The park salutes Anne, and is glad to see her off to another wonderful maritime public/private partnership. Fair winds and following seas!

## Derek Santos Takes New Position with City

It was here in 2001, on the pages of the *Toggle Iron*, that we welcomed Derek Santos as the park’s first Historical Architect and newest member of the growing staff at New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park. So it is fitting, seven years later, that we use the same platform to announce his departure from the park and his taking a new position with the City of New Bedford. Derek, whose career in historic preservation and planning started with the city over a decade ago, has rejoined the municipality as the Director of Planning and Development for the New Bedford Economic Development Council.

During Derek’s tenure at the park, he increased awareness of historic preservation, established partnerships with stakeholders of the national park and, his most significant legacy, assisted in the management of the

rehabilitation of the Corson Building. As part of his position, Derek also served as the secretary for the New Bedford Historical Commission (NBHC), ensuring that the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* were met in all restoration and rehabilitation projects undertaken in the park. He was responsible for developing the first comprehensive member guidebook for the NBHC, considered a model for similar commissions across the state, as well as a quarterly newsletter.

In his position as Historical Architect, he was charged with providing technical assistance to the property owners of over 70 historic structures in the park, 14 of them deemed mission essential in the park’s General Management Plan. Derek could

often be found out in park talking to these property owners, architects, and builders about appropriate paint colors, signage, and exterior façade material options. But he is most proud of his work on the Corson Building rehabilitation project as his biggest contribution, not only to the advancement of historic preservation in New Bedford but to the mission of the National Park Service.

Although the staff will miss the daily interaction with Derek, going over the play by play of the Red Sox game from the night before or discussing the latest news story, we will, undoubtedly, continue to seek his expertise and sound council regarding historic preservation issues in the park and wish him the best of luck in his new position.



# Thanks for the Memories Anne and Derek



Anne Brengle and Park Superintendent Celeste Bernardo marching in the city's Cape Verdean Parade in July of 2006.



Anne Brengle speaking at the ground-breaking ceremony of the Corson Building project. In the background (left to right) are State Representative Antonio Cabral, Former WHALE Board of Directors President Daniel Perry, City of New Bedford Mayor Scott Lang, Congressman Barney Frank, and Senator Edward M. Kennedy.



Left: Derek Santos (far right) was an original crew member of the *Park Sharks*, the official whaleboat racing team of the park in 2000 and 2001. Two crew members have since gone on to become superintendents, Tom Ross (bottom row left) is currently Superintendent at Sagamore Hill NHS, while Mike Caldwell (bottom row right) is Superintendent at Valley Forge National Park. Rounding out the crew are (top row left to right) Steve Peixoto, Glenn Gonsalves and Frank Barrows.



Above: Anne Brengle, serving as coxswain, in an Azorean whaleboat constructed as part of a collaborative project between the Azorean Maritime Heritage Society, the New Bedford Whaling Museum, and the National Park Service.



(left to right) Frank Barrows, Jennifer Gonsalves and Derek Santos during the *National Parks America Tour* volunteer event in May of 2007.



Derek portrayed an Azorean whaler in *the City that Lit the World*, the park's official orientation movie.

# Save the Date - Whaling Heritage Symposium

## June 16-18, 2008

New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, New Bedford Whaling Museum, NOAA's Maritime Heritage Program, and Mystic Seaport, will sponsor a 3-day whaling heritage symposium.

The event will offer the public and professional alike the opportunity to examine the broader cultural scope of historic whaling, the significance of specific events and geographic locations in the industry's history, and the ways we can continue to learn from our own whaling heritage.

The proposed schedule includes plenary presentations, speaker panel sessions, public talks, tours, dinners and receptions. There will be a registration fee of \$175. The event will also offer out-of-town visitors one of their last chances to go on board the Charles W. Morgan before the historic ship, the world's oldest whaling vessel, is placed in dry dock in November.

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**June 16 & 17 -**  
Mystic Seaport,  
Mystic, Connecticut

**June 18 -**  
New Bedford Whaling  
Museum and New Bedford  
Whaling National Historical  
Park,  
New Bedford,  
Massachusetts

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